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Amendments to the Specification:

The paragraph starting at page 3, line 19, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- The air/fuel mixture, which is necessary for operation, is prepared in a mixture preparation unit which, in the embodiment shown, is a carburetor 12. The carburetor shown in FIG. 1 is a membrane carburetor having a fuel-filled control chamber 13 which is supplied with fuel via an inlet valve (not shown) from a fuel pump 14. The control chamber 13 is connected to an intake channel section 17, which is configured as a ~~venturi~~ venturi, via idle nozzles 15 and a main nozzle 16. In the region of the idle nozzles 15, a rotatably journalled throttle flap 18 is provided. A starting device in the form of a choke flap 19 is mounted upstream of the intake channel section 17. --

The paragraph starting at page 3, line 30, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- According to a feature of the invention, a bypass channel 20 is provided which includes two line sections 21 and 22. Referred to the flow direction 30 of the air/fuel mixture, the section 21 branches off upstream of the ~~throttle~~ choke flap 19 and the second line section 22 opens into the intake channel section 17 downstream of the choke flap 19. The line sections 21 and 22 are connected to each other by a switching valve 23 which is actuated when starting the engine. Preferably, the switching valve 23 is

actuated by the combustion pressure in the combustion chamber 3 of the engine 1. In a special embodiment, the valve member 26 of the valve 23 is actuated by the switching element 27 of a decompression valve 24. The switching valve 23 is preferably integrated into the decompression valve 24. A seal (25, 36) separates the valve space 32 of the switching valve 23 from the interior space of the decompression valve 24 or from the ambient. --

The paragraph starting at page 5, line 12, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- Most internal combustion engines 1 are manually crank started, for example, via a pull-rope starter or the like which engages the crankshaft 11. The start is facilitated because of the switched decompression valve 24. As soon as an ignition is triggered via the spark plug 35, the pressure in the combustion chamber 3 increases tremendously and acts on the valve plate 28 so that the latch device 34 releases because of the pressure force and the decompression valve 24, supported by the force of the spring 31, switches into the closed position shown in FIG. 2. The running-up engine draws more mixture through the ~~inlet 6~~ inlet 8 with increasing rpm and, for this reason, the underpressure in the intake section 17 increases. With the closing of the decompression valve 24, the valve member 26 is simultaneously transferred into the open position of FIG. 2. For this reason, when the engine 1 starts to run, the bypass channel 20 switches into a less throttled position, especially

into an open position. The starter device 19 is bypassed via the line section 21, the valve space 32 and the line section 22. The pressure in the intake channel section 17 drops so that overenrichment of the mixture is avoided. The mixture leans because of the additional air supplied via the bypass 20 and the engine continues to run. --